

Sadly, though, we have seen this before. The government has been shut down. The government's debt has been defaulted upon. So how is it possible that there is even talk of not funding our government again by anybody? But that is what they are doing.

Just 2 weeks ago the American people sent us a very strong message: Work together. In the press conferences that followed this month's midterm elections, Republicans were saying all the right things about compromise and bipartisanship. Yet, instead of looking for common ground and working to compromise, some of these Republicans are more interested in threats and ultimatums. Why? Because these radical Republicans object to President Obama using his constitutionally established authority to do what President Ronald Reagan and both George Bushes have done—fix as much of the system as he can to protect families suffering under the broken immigration system. Going back to Dwight D. Eisenhower, every President since then has used Executive authority to fix America's immigration system—every President, Republicans and Democrats. For the Republicans to take issue with President Obama for doing the same thing is hypocritical. Why didn't they complain when the two Bush Presidents did things administratively? Why?

I hope Republicans in Congress will object to this brinkmanship. A scorched-earth policy is no way to go. Instead, responsible leaders in the Republican Party need to work with us to complete the business of funding our government regardless of when the President acts to keep families together.

Mr. LEAHY. Will the distinguished majority leader yield for an observation?

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAINE). Will the majority leader yield to the Senator from Vermont for a question?

Mr. REID. I yield to the Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as long as I have served in the Senate—and I have served the longest in this body—I have never seen a time when noncontroversial nominations were being held up, whether we have had a Republican or Democratic President. I would note for the majority leader that we have on the calendar 18 nominees for Federal judgeships that passed unanimously. Every Republican and every Democrat in the Judiciary Committee voted for them. Many of them were recommended by Republican Senators and four of them for judicial emergencies. The oldest one has been pending since June, having gone through the committee unanimously. This is not being responsible to the American people.

The distinguished majority leader talked about the use of Executive orders. Concerns have been expressed by the other side about Executive orders on immigration. I would remind every-

body that this body by a 2-to-1 margin—Republicans and Democrats joined together last year to pass a comprehensive immigration bill which covered everything from the people on the borders to those who were already in this country. The Republican leadership in the House has refused to take it up. They complain about the President 1½ years later—during all this time that has passed between the Republican and Democratic votes here, they have refused to take it up. Yet they complain that the President is going to do something.

I say bring it up and vote yes or vote no. Stop this “we will vote maybe.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. To the President pro tempore of the Senate, if the Speaker of the House of Representatives, JOHN BOEHNER, brought up the bill that passed here in the Senate, it would pass overwhelmingly in the House. Virtually every Democrat would vote for it, and I suggest that probably half of the Republicans would vote for it. He won't allow a vote. What is this about? It is beyond my ability to comprehend how they are willing to do everything they can to stop this President from doing what Presidents have done since Dwight Eisenhower.

I would also say this: We have gotten some judges done. That is because we changed the rules to do the outlandish thing of having a majority of the Senate determine whether someone should be confirmed.

If we look at the Constitution of the United States, the people who drafted that Constitution were very smart. We know a number of them were geniuses. And they were very precise in what they wanted to have supermajority votes on. On judges they didn't want supermajority votes but a simple majority of this body, and that is what we did in changing the rules.

But I say to my friend, in spite of that, we have been able to get a lot of judges done, we are going to wind up—by the time the Judiciary Committee continues to do the good work they do, we will probably have over 20 judges who need to be approved this Congress. Postcloture, under the rules we have, there is only 1 hour of time that can be used, so we can get through the judges very quickly. For sub-Cabinet officers it takes 8 hours, and we are normally willing to yield back our time, so 4 hours on every one of those.

We have scores—we are approaching, counting judges and all of the nominations, well over 150 who have been held up, people who have been waiting and waiting. These are jobs that are needed in our country; these are not new positions we have created.

So I would hope we can get past the bitterness that has been created in this body and get the nominations done. There is no reason a judge-to-be should have to wait for all this time, as the Senator from Vermont has indicated, just to get a vote. Whatever he is doing

now has been put on hold, and this is throughout the whole government.

So I would hope we can get a lot of these done. If not, we are going to have to spend a lot of time here because we cannot leave this Congress with all these things undone. I hope we can work together, as I have indicated.

REMEMBERING HOWARD GREENE, JR.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I want to say one thing while my friend is on the floor.

When I came to the Senate, my friend from Vermont had already been here a dozen years. I remember—and I know he does—a man who had been the secretary for the majority and the secretary for the minority who controlled the staff of the Republicans. The Senator remembers Howard Greene—a guy who did not smoke a cigar, he just chewed on it all the time; he chewed on his cigar. That is when the rules were not nearly as strict as they are now about smoking.

Howard Greene was so nice to me as a new Senator. He had a lot of authority. For over three decades he was a recognizable person here on the Senate floor. In fact, specifically, for 28 years he held many positions, including as a doorkeeper, as a cloakroom assistant. He was, as I just indicated, both secretary for the minority and secretary for the majority.

Howard finished his distinguished career as the Sergeant at Arms. He retired in 1996.

I offer my condolences to Howard Greene's family and loved ones during this difficult time. Although it is of little consolation, I hope they know how grateful we are for Howard's many years of sacrifice to this body. He will be greatly missed, and he was very kind and thoughtful to me as a new Senator.

I say to my friend, you do remember Howard Greene?

Mr. LEAHY. I do.

Mr. REID. I thank the Presiding Officer.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 5:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF HOWARD O. GREENE, JR.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, this afternoon I wish to say a word about Howard Greene, whose passing we mourn today.

Howard was a leading figure here in the Senate for many years. I know Members of both parties remember his time here with fondness, even though he retired from the Senate nearly two decades ago. And I think that says a lot about Howard.

He began his service here modestly enough as a doorkeeper right outside this Chamber. The year was 1968. Howard was 26, a student at the University of Maryland. He originally intended to become a history teacher, but over time his ambitions changed, from wanting to teach about history to wanting to help shape it—and what a lucky break for the Senate.

His considerable talents were soon put to work in the Republican cloakroom. It was a big promotion, even if Howard had to first explain to his mother that working in the cloakroom didn't mean he would be hanging up people's coats.

Howard quickly gained the confidence of Senators as he rose rapidly through the ranks. His deep institutional knowledge, strong work ethic, honesty, and sense of humor were appreciated by those who worked with him, and his talents were essential for the many who relied upon him.

After the Reagan landslide of 1980, Howard put his institutional knowledge to work as secretary of the new Republican majority. After so many years out of power, it was a challenging task, but he was up to it.

All told, Howard would serve the institution he loved for more than 28 years, working under Republican leaders such as Howard Baker and Bob Dole, until stepping down from his final position of Sergeant at Arms in 1996.

Senators from both parties had a lot of nice things to say about him back then. The late Senator from Alaska, Ted Stevens, said it could seem like Howard had a crystal ball when it came to counting votes and predicting outcomes, and he praised him for his "careful analysis, knowledge of the issues, understanding of the Members, and . . . hard work" that often made his forecasts correct.

Senator David Pryor from Arkansas, a Democrat, noted that Howard "respected and served and answered to not

only the Senators on . . . [the Republican] side of the aisle," but to the Members on his side as well.

It is clear that this man from Lewes, DE, had uncommon talent and ability. We are grateful he chose to share it with us for so many years. We honor him for it today, and we send our sincerest condolences to his family in this difficult time.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 579, submitted earlier today; further, that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 579) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CCDBG PROGRAM

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I come to the floor today because in just a little over 2 hours we are going to take up the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014. Let me explain what that is.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant Program was created in 1990 to provide a voucher to meet the childcare needs of families at risk of having to make the decision that one or both parents couldn't work because childcare had such a tremendous expense with it. We wanted those parents to be able to participate in the productive part of our economy and society.

I can honestly say this is one of the most successful programs Congress has ever produced. The program, as is the case with every bill, is required to be reauthorized after a certain period of time. It was started in 1995—I might add the year I got here—and it was reauthorized in 1996. This was the last time this bill was ever reauthorized.

Now, let me point out that authorization and funding are two different things. These vouchers have existed in the system but Congress has not reauthorized the program; therefore, we haven't changed the program since 1996. I ask my colleagues to stop for a moment and think about how society has changed since 1996. The world has changed since 1996. Things we took for granted in 1996 we need proof of today. Things we didn't worry about in 1996 we worry about today. Let me suggest

that childcare is no different. There is still a need for some type of vouchers for families who are on the bubble, and I dare say that childcare has gotten incredibly expensive since 1996.

I rise today to congratulate this body because this afternoon, in just under 2 hours, we are going to pass the first reauthorization of the Child Care Development Block Grant program since 1996. I will be really very honest; it wouldn't be possible if it wasn't for my partner in this endeavor, BARBARA MIKULSKI. Senator MIKULSKI has been tenacious. She has stood by my side, and she has told me when she didn't think we should move forward, because as easy and as common sense as it sounds, it has been really difficult to get to this point. This has been a 3-year process. So for those who criticize Congress, let me assure those people, we have touched every base we can touch.

Several years ago, while we served as chair and ranking member of the Subcommittee on Children and Families, Senator MIKULSKI and I promised at that time to address the shortcomings in the CCDBG Program so that children could attend childcare and their families could expect a healthy setting that fostered their development.

Now, for years, we have heard stories about abuse and neglect in many childcare settings—stories that continue to break my heart and, I think, break the heart of every American. We saw numerous inspector general reports that documented unsafe conditions where children were neglected and Federal tax dollars were misused.

Let me stop here and say this. Everything we do in this bill only applies to a childcare facility that accepts CCDBG money. They can be private institutions. They can be faith-based institutions. Their construction can be a combination of all of the above. If they accept one penny of CCDBG money, they are now required to meet the quality standards and safety standards we set in this bill. Now, in North Carolina, that covers practically every childcare facility. But in every State they don't go to the lengths we do in North Carolina nor that we go to in this piece of legislation. I hope my colleagues will go back to the States they hail from, and they will suggest that things such as background checks for workers at a childcare facility is common sense. To say to a parent who is dropping off a young child, whether the Federal Government subsidized with a voucher or not—that parent should feel 100-percent confident that the worker there is not a convicted felon, that they are not a drug addict, that they have passed the minimal background check that most of us would think is common sense.

I might also take the opportunity to stop and say to the Presiding Officer, who represents Virginia, you might think—gosh, this is a financial burden on all childcare centers. No, this is a \$15 investment in the safety of every child who is housed in their facility.